



Teacher Guide to Using Released NAEP Questions

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) makes questions from previous administrations available to teachers, parents, guardians, and students on an ongoing basis. This guide is designed to help teachers understand the range of questions available from NAEP and how to use these questions in their classrooms in a manner consistent with state guidelines.

NAEP Questions

The NAEP questions Web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls/> [Outside Source]) provides a variety of questions that teachers can use in the classroom to help students understand the type of questions that may be asked on NAEP or in other assessment programs. The site also provides easy access to student responses and scoring guides that are released to the public. These questions are presented for the following uses:

- Examples of what NAEP asks students at grades four, eight, and twelve for the national and state assessments and at ages 9, 13, and 17 for the long-term trend assessments.
- Exemplars of questions that probe students' knowledge of specific content.

The NAEP site also provides for a way for a teacher to compare one's class performance on a specific question to that of students across the nation and state. This is a helpful tool for teachers who may be interested in gauging the level of their students' knowledge to that of students in the same grade or age level in the nation.

Teachers can search for questions by conducting any of the following searches:

- Quick Search: Search for questions by subject and grade.
- Advanced Search: Within a subject, search for questions by grade, content classification, question type, difficulty, and other subject-specific variables.
- Search by Block: Within a subject, search for a specific "block" or "booklet" of questions that were administered to students who participated in the NAEP assessments.



Note: California *Education Code*, Section 60611 prohibits “any program of specific preparation for the statewide pupil assessment program or a particular test used therein.” Sample questions, therefore, should not be used to create practice tests for NAEP or any other state assessments.

Practice questions can be used to support the following objectives:

- Familiarize students with handling open-ended and multiple-choice questions.
- Initiate classroom discussions around certain ideas targeted by the questions.
- Discuss common error patterns which are often incorporated as distractors in multiple-choice questions.
- Prepare students in general on test-taking strategies.

CDE guidelines on academic preparation for state assessments, which address the use of released questions, are found on the Student Testing Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/>.

Types of Released Questions

NAEP released questions are available for the following subjects: reading, mathematics, writing, civics, geography, history, and the arts. Questions include those asked in grades four, eight, and twelve. In addition, long-term trend questions are available for students ages 9, 13, and 17. Released questions cover those available from administrations in 1990 through 2005. There are over 1,800 questions, plus another 142 questions from the 1996 science assessment available in Portable Document Format (PDF). The released test questions represent a range of question types and difficulties. For each subject, each released question provides background on question content, student performance data, a scoring key and sample student responses.

Many NAEP questions are consistent with the content and skills of the California content standards. The following are two released NAEP questions that are consistent with the California standards:

Sample No. 1

Subject: Reading
Grade: Eight
Year: 2005



Students read the poem “The Fish” from The Complete Poems 1927-1979 by Elizabeth Bishop. Copyright (c) 1979, 1983 by Alice Helen Methfessel. Reprinted by permission of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, LLC. This poem is available on the NAEP questions tool Web site. Students are asked to respond to multiple-choice and constructed-response questions based on the poem.

Question:

The following is a released constructed-response question, which is based on the poem:

Explain how the language used in this poem is different from the language used in everyday speech. Use a line or phrase from the poem as an example.

This question may be viewed with sample student responses that illustrate evidence of full, partial, or little or no comprehension. Scorers’ comments also are provided to explain the reasons for the scores assigned.

This Sample No. 1 question is consistent with California English-Language Arts Grade 8, Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development 1.1 – Analyze idioms, analogies, metaphors, and similes to infer the literal and figurative meaning of phrases.

Sample No. 2

Subject: Mathematics
Grade: Four
Year: 1990

Question:

The difference between 85 and 53 is 32. Meredith added some number to 85 and then added the same number to 53. What would be the difference between the two new numbers?

- A. More than 32
- B. Less than 32
- C. 32
- D. It depends on the number added to 85 and 53.

Answer: C

This Sample No. 2 question is consistent with California Mathematics Grade 4, Algebra and Functions 2.1 – Know and understand that equals added to equals are equal.



Additional Resources

Teacher Instructional Focus	Web Site / Page Description	Web Site / Page
Teacher guidelines on academic preparation for students for state assessments	Teachers can find the guidelines on academic preparation for state assessments (see pages 3 and 4 for guidance in determining how teachers can use the released NAEP questions)	http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/documents/academicprep.pdf
NAEP frameworks overview	Teachers can review framework content in appropriate subjects and review skills appropriate to various grade levels being tested	http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/frameworks.asp (Outside Source)
NAEP released questions	This site contains the number of released questions in each subject, year, and grade for national and state NAEP assessments. The same information is available for long-term trend by age. There are approximately 1,800 questions available in the NAEP questions tool on this site.	http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrts/ (Outside Source) (Click on "Search Options" to use the NAEP Questions Tool)
NAEP demonstration booklets	These booklets contain descriptions of each test, test directions, questionnaires, and sample questions that can be used in the classroom.	http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/booklets.asp (Outside Source)
NAEP site for students	Teachers can encourage students to go to this site to learn more about NAEP. Students can practice skill building at this site.	http://nces.ed.gov/nceskids/ (Outside Source)
Supplementary content review for state and national assessments	Teachers can access free federal resources for educational agencies in content areas.	http://www.ed.gov/programs/eag/index.html (Outside Source) (Click on the "Teaching Resources" link for free federal resources for educational agencies)